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Medical school twice: in English, then Spanish

By Breena Kent

ASUNCION, Paraguay (BP)—Tom Kent sweated out medical school two decades ago. But to get a permanent medical license in Paraguay, the Southern Baptist missionary just finished going through medical training all over again.

The 47-year-old Louisiana native has struggled through six years and 30 different medical exams—all in Spanish—to get medical validation from the University of Asuncion. What's more, he did it while working at Baptist Hospital in Asuncion, where he's been practicing since 1976 with temporary permits.

The permits served their purpose, but Kent had to obtain a permanent license to keep practicing medicine in Paraguay.

"Repeating medical school after 20 years was not something I wanted to do," Kent admitted after finishing. "It was tough enough in 1958-62, but it was even harder 20 years later in Spanish, after medical knowledge has doubled every five years."

Kent flunked the first exam in biophysics. After that defeat he seriously considered calling it quits and turning to private practice in the United States.

"I had no desire at all to submerge

myself in a detailed study of biophysics when there were so many people to care for," he said. "But I felt God calling me to Paraguay, so I prayed that he would change my mind and give me a strong desire to study."

Kent's prayer was answered. For the next four months he actually had "fun" studying facts that were only theories when he first encountered them.

The anatomy exam was even worse. The anatomy professor told Kent that every American who'd taken his exam had failed it. For an entire year the missionary dissected cadavers with other medical students and struggled to memorize 7,000 pages of the French system of anatomy translated into Spanish.

"At 5 a.m. on the morning of the anatomy exam, I was ready to pack my bags and return to the United States," Kent said. "But my wife prayed, 'Lord, whatever they ask of him, let him be able to answer.' Seven of the eight subjects on that exam I had been over within the prior 24 hours, and the eighth within two weeks. My exam grade was 100!"

Judi Kent, in fact, made a habit of praying in the car outside the medi-

cal faculty building while her husband took exams inside. Often she waited all day for him to finish.

Even after completing medical school, Kent faced a possible three-year wait for his license to be approved and signed by government authorities. But one day before his Feb. 11 departure for furlough in Louisiana, the wait came to a surprising end.

"One of the key secretaries fainted while I was waiting in the (government) office for my papers, and I attended her," Kent explained. "Her friend was the woman who was to type them, so in appreciation she typed them straight away. I arrived at the Ministry of Health to get them signed just as they were closing, but the secretary was a Christian and delighted that I had gotten my title re-validated. Ten minutes before the office closed I got my Paraguayan license number."

When he gets back to Paraguay next year, Kent will be able to devote a lot more time to church planting and medical ministry, including mobile clinics in rural areas and training Baptist medical workers.

(Breena Kent, daughter of Tom and Judi Kent, is studying journalism at Louisiana College.)



Water Valley destruction

This is about all that is left of the buildings of First Baptist Church, Water Valley, where a tornado stamped out the center of town Saturday afternoon. The church's steeple was expected to fall at any time. Two of the four columns hadn't been found yet. The educational building and family life center were wiped out. Mississippi Baptists sent their disaster team into town to help with feeding the victims and begin clean up operations. Story on page 3, more photos on page 6.—(Tim Nicholas photo)

Hammering away at housing needs

By Sherri Anthony

CANADATOWN, Ky. (BP)—Because of the hard work, dedication, and enormous commitment of a group of Kentucky college students, the Canada family is now settled in a brand new house.

The Canadas, along with their three children, live in the Appalachian mountains of Kentucky where unemployment is a fact of life. Boarded coal mines overlook their valley, serving as silent reminders of better days.

But in spite of the problems that mass unemployment brings, the people who live here are reluctant to leave. Jim Wilson, director of student ministries at nearby Cumberland College, explained why: "Their support system is Canadatown."

Residents of Canadatown have learned to cope with poverty and its attendant problems in creative ways. Gerald Canada built his family's first home. Linda Canada recalled his work with pride. "Gerald built that house himself. He hauled wood from trash piles and homes that weren't used anymore. We didn't spend a dime building it 'cause we didn't have a dime to spend."

Responding to this kind of dogged determination and the crushing needs of the area, students from nearby Cumberland College formed Mountain Outreach. With help from mission teams assigned by the Home Mission Board, Mountain Outreach built five houses for needy families during the summer of 1983.

For homes built at an average cost of \$2,500-\$3,500, recipients of homes must pay the cost of materials with a 20-year, interest-free loan from Mountain Outreach.

Groups that work with Mountain Outreach are required to bring \$2,000 for materials and supply their own room and board. Teenagers from First Baptist Church, Ellisville, Mo., helped Mountain Outreach volunteers build the last two homes, including the Canadas.

"Our kids were used to 'glamour' tours," said Skip Lloyd, youth director at the church. "They'd go on a choir tour, sing a concert in the

evening and spend their days in Silver Dollar City. This year I wanted them to see and experience missions."

Lloyd contacted Esther Burroughs in the HMB's special mission ministries department and she suggested they work with Mountain Outreach. Said Burroughs, "I encourage youth leaders to balance their programs between activities that give something to kids and activities that require something of kids."

In Canadatown, the Ellisville group quickly learned to pound nails, mix concrete and saw wood. For six days, they ate bologna sandwiches and drank Kool-Aid, often sharing with community children who came to watch the construction.

Team member Barb Olano, with one dust-covered child in her arms and two others hanging to her blue jeans, confided, "When I first got here, I was real worried about my fingernails." She glanced at her chipped, broken nails; the raspberry polish was almost gone. "You know what? They don't matter."

On the last day in Canadatown, the Ellisville youth turned down the chaperone's suggestion of quitting early for a swim party. They wanted to work as long as they could.

But their new-found commitment didn't end there. At Christmas, a group returned to Canadatown bringing clothes and toys for the friends they had made during the summer.

Lloyd observed, "As trite as it sounds, today these kids have a different view of life than when they arrived at Canadatown."

For Robert Day, a Cumberland College student who helped begin Mountain Outreach, that different view of life raises a big question. "How much do I sacrifice for those less fortunate than I?" he asked thoughtfully. "I don't know the answer, but I do know that I could sell everything I have, move out here, live as they do, but it wouldn't be the same: because I could leave."

(Sherri Anthony is editorial assistant in the Home Mission Board's evangelism section.)

Home studies in Cali

CALI Colombia—Nine Bible study groups have been launched in homes of members of First Baptist Church, Cali, Colombia. The effort is related to the Colombian Baptist Convention's theme: "A People Marching Triumphant with the Bible in the Family." Pastor Ramon Medina, who also is executive secretary of the convention, spearheaded the emphasis on the family's role in evangelism.

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Planned growth in giving

A new concept in Southern Baptist stewardship is Planned Growth in Giving. It may be awhile before the term becomes commonplace in the church, but it would be well for church members to begin to familiarize themselves with what it means.

According to the planners, Planned Growth in Giving is "a 15-year, 15-step growth plan in giving for individuals, families, churches, associations, and conventions. It is a call for commitments."

The stated purpose is "to undergird the churches and enable Baptists to achieve their adopted Bold Mission Thrust objectives."

Actually, if Planned Growth in Giving is to be an effective factor in Bold Mission Thrust, it will have to be a grass roots movement, if indeed there is such a thing among Southern Baptists. The Baptist concept is that the church is the highest level of operation, so grass roots might hardly be the proper term. The idea is that the wave of giving that would mean dramatically increased funds for Southern Baptists' two missions boards would have to initiate in the churches. The final goal is to provide at least 75 percent of the money going to the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program for use for the two missions boards.

In order to accomplish this, church members will be challenged to increase their giving through their churches by some percent each year beginning in 1985 and going until 2000. In like manner, once the members have stepped up their giving, the churches will be challenged to increase the portion going from the church to the state convention by some percent each year through the same period.

The same will hold true for state conventions until when the wave gets to the Southern Baptist Convention budget it would provide the 75 per-

cent hoped for in funds for the two missions boards.

Plans of action call for 1984 to be a year of preparation and for 1985 to be the kick-off year. Activities will get under way in January and February next year with national seminars in four locations. They will be Jan. 7 to 11 in a western state, Jan. 16 to 18 in the Dallas area, Feb. 4 to 8 at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Alabama, and Feb. 25 to March 1 at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center in North Carolina.

One of the key factors in the project will be seminars in each state. The seminar leaders in the states will be asked to participate in one of the national seminars in preparation for leading their own. The national seminar nearest to Mississippians will be the one at Shocco Springs in Alabama that is to be Feb. 4 to 8. That is also the date of the Mississippi Evangelism-Bible Conference. The next nearest would be the one in the Dallas area on Jan. 16 to 18.

Tasks forces for Planned Growth in Giving have been established for the Southern Baptist Convention and for the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The Southern Baptist Convention task force has outlined particulars for the national seminars and the state seminars and has detailed the responsibilities of the state task forces. Associations and churches will be asked also to establish task forces, and the national task force has suggested responsibilities for those groups.

Following 1985, the years of 1986 and 1987 have been designated as Introduction Years, and 1988 through 2000 have been designated as Nurture and Growth Years.

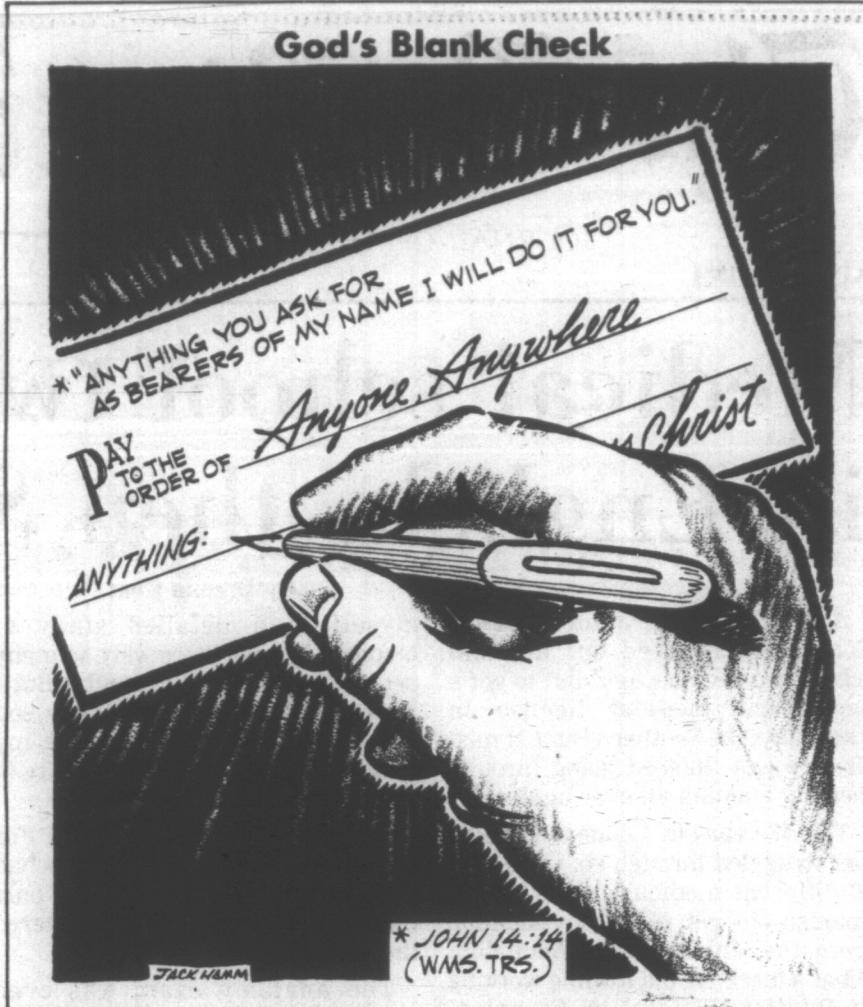
The purpose for Planned Growth in Giving is to provide the funds whereby the concepts of Bold Mission Thrust, adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1977, may be carried out. Bold Mission Thrust is the

result of a study of Southern Baptist Convention missions potential during the last quarter of this century. A 21-person committee was established during the convention in 1974 when Owen Cooper of Mississippi was president. The committee reported in 1976, and Bold Mission Thrust was put in motion the next year.

Julius Thompson, consultant in the Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion Department for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, is the Mississippi director for Planned Growth in Giving. The State task force chairman is James Yates, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City. Charles Pickering, a Laurel attorney and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is also on the task force as are Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and John Alexander, director of the Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion Department.

Others on the task force are Ingram Foster, Prentiss layman; Bobby Perry, Gulf Coast Association director of missions; J. W. Brister, Hinds-Madison Association director of missions; Alan Day, First, McComb, pastor; Leon Young, Lauderdale Association director of missions; Raymond Lloyd, First, Starkville, pastor; Charles Nestor, First, Bruce, pastor; Larry Fields, Harrisburg, Tupelo, pastor; Earl Craig, First, Jackson, pastor; Harry Lucenay, Temple, Hattiesburg, pastor; Jimmy McGee, First, Grenada, pastor; Gordon Sansing, First, Vicksburg, pastor; and Tommy Tutor, Oakhurst, Clarksdale, pastor.

If Planned Growth in Giving works as it is designed to, there would be a dramatic growth in giving all along the line. The projections note there would be a seven-fold growth in local church giving, a 10-fold growth at the state convention level, and a 12-fold growth for the Southern Baptist Convention.



"May be Pentecostal"

Robison-Green team seen as controversial

By Toby Druin

DALLAS (BP)—The ministry of longtime Southern Baptist evangelist James Robison and his new associate, Milton Green, is causing controversy in the denomination.

"I am concerned," says James T. Draper Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas. "It is a problem all over the country. It has divided friends; it has affected churches."

Over the past two years, seminars sponsored by the James Robison Evangelistic Association and featuring the Bible teaching of Green, a one-time carpet cleaner from Cleveland, Tenn., have attracted thousands of participants, many Southern Baptist. Critics see in the seminars charismatic teachings, including emphases on healing and demonology and an anti-local church, anti-pastor bias.

Draper, who is Robison's pastor at the Euless church, said he is concerned about what he thinks is an extreme emphasis on the demonic and an abuse of the doctrine of healing.

One long-time Robison associate, Freddie Gage, severed a 25-year relationship over Robison's ties with Green and "errant theology." Gage calls the movement a "cult" and said the breaking of fellowship is "due to Robison's emphasis on demons, curses, signs, wonders, healings, and revelations" and his neglect of evangelism.

Robison's speaking engagements at several prominent Southern Baptist Churches have been cancelled or postponed because of his new emphasis. Among them are First Church, Dallas, the nation's largest Protestant congregation, and First Southern Baptist Church, Del City,

Oklahoma, where former SBC President Bailey E. Smith is pastor.

Tom Melzoni, executive director of church ministries at First Church, Dallas, said he asked Pastor W. A. Criswell to postpone Robison's speaking engagement in 1983 "until there could be some clear definition of where James Robison stood theologically." Melzoni added he doubts "very seriously" if Robison will be rescheduled.

Smith said he cancelled because "I was afraid he would teach that sort of thing that I think is totally erroneous. . . ." Smith added the Green influence has been divisive. "They preach unity but the seminars have caused more divisiveness than I have seen in my lifetime."

Robison now is a frequent speaker at Pentecostal services. Critics say he is at best no longer preaching "traditional Southern Baptist" doctrines and at worst simply no longer a Southern Baptist.

Robison was asked if he now is a charismatic and said: "I don't want to call myself anything. If I say I am now a charismatic, that's like saying I am not a Baptist, and then Baptists don't want to listen to me. If I say I am not a charismatic, then the charismatics don't want to listen to me. What I am trying to be is a Christian."

He added: "I have never spoken in tongues, but I believe it is a legitimate gift; and I always have, even more so today because I am seeing the genuineness of the gift. . . ."

Robison said his life was changed when Green prayed for him two years ago, setting him "free," he says, from "a claw in the brain" that (Continued on page 7)

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Radio-TV Commission has \$2.7 million pledged

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission reported receiving gifts and pledges of \$2.7 million to help launch the American Christian Television System during a nationwide satellite broadcast April 12 to dinner meetings at closed circuit locations in 20 states.

Meetings were held in Jackson and Hattiesburg.

Encouraged by news of a \$1 million anonymous gift, supporters of ACTS pledged an additional \$1.8 million over the next three years.

The 75-minute broadcast, which previewed ACTS programs and asked for prayer and financial support for the venture, was carried live from the studios of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commis-

sion, which is assembling the network.

Jimmy R. Allen, president of the commission and ACTS, called the event the largest dinner meeting in the Southern Baptist history. More than 4,500 attended, with almost 1,200 pledging an estimated \$1,825,000. The figures likely will go higher, Allen said, when all reports are in.

Allen said the event was a project of the commission's ongoing development program.

His announcement of the initial \$1 million gift early in the broadcast brought applause from the Fort Worth dinner guests, who served as the studio audience for the broadcast.

Allen told the participants, who (Continued on page 7)

The Baptist Record

Tornadoes strike state; Baptists respond quickly

By Tim Nicholas

A door handle was all that prevented Guy Reedy, pastor of First Baptist Church, Water Valley, from being blown away.

Saturday afternoon, about 5:30, a tornado scooped out about half of Water Valley, a north Mississippi town of 4,500, taking with it scores of homes, businesses, and most of First Baptist Church.

At the time, Reedy had just left and electrician in the sanctuary and headed for his car. "I realized from the noise I was in trouble," said Reedy. He returned to the back of the sanctuary, but wind pressure prevented his opening the door.

A chimney effect between the buildings began pulling Reedy away. "Had it not been for the handles (on the door)," said Reedy, "I really would have been sucked out of there."

Reedy came through with only minor cuts and abrasions. The electrician stayed safe in the only church building that still stands. The education building and family life center were destroyed.

But an estimated 15 persons lost their lives in the several tornadoes which hit Mississippi counties Saturday, only a day before Easter.

Most of the lives were lost in a shopping area a block from the church in Water Valley. A Jones Supermarket, Western Auto, Texaco station, and a Quik Stop store were rubble after the storm struck.

Digging out began immediately, though not everyone was accounted for even the next afternoon.

Among the volunteers were Mississippi Baptists who responded individually and in groups quickly. James Griffin, a member of Sylva Rena Church, and a plumber, volunteered to help cut off gas to damaged houses.

Wayne Eubanks and his son Wayne, members of First Church, Ackerman, spent Saturday night in their van, working the Mississippi emergency side band net, helping establish contact between victims and relatives and rescue workers.

Charles Austin, a ham operator for

the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit, spent the night at the National Guard Armory, readying the arrival of the Baptist disaster unit, a 40-foot mobile mass feeding kitchen.

The Baptist kitchen arrived early Easter morning and set up south of the damage. Traffic was thick and the unit provided hot meals for mobile units which went into the neighborhoods to feed victims and workers.

David Kilgore, a volunteer from First Baptist Church, Coffeeville, said plenty of people were hungry, but couldn't get out of their neighborhoods. His mobile unit fed about 50 for supper Sunday. "I saw little children carrying their Easter baskets in front of their torn up houses," said Kilgore.

Sunday evening, late, a county supervisor, a member of the Church of Christ, offered his church's parking lot, which was clear of debris; and the unit moved there, to the corner of highway 315 and West Main, only a block from much of the damage.

Jim Didlake, consultant in the state Brotherhood Department, and on site coordinator of the unit, estimated that up to 1,000 meals would be served Monday. Only about 350 were served Sunday when the unit was too far away from victims and when roadblocks and Sunday drivers kept Highway 7 clogged.

Food was provided by the Red Cross, and volunteers from area churches served it as the Disaster Task Force kept the unit operating.

Paul Harrell, state Brotherhood Director, and director of the disaster ministry for Mississippi Baptists, said that potential volunteers who are willing to help with rebuilding, reroofing, and cleanup, should contact their county director of missions, who will give information to Harrell.

Glenfield Baptist Church, in Union County, was said to have had a lot of damage. Director of missions, Marvin Cox, said he did not know if the church was salvageable.

Moss Hill Baptist Chapel in Union lost its steeple. That mobile chapel is

owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

In Water Valley, most of the electricity, gas, and phones were still off as the weekend ended. But the weather gave people a break, with a sunny, though windy, Easter. Victims and workers alike, drank gallons of coffee, took hygiene kits provided by RAs and Acteens, and ate the hot food with words of gratitude for the ministry that Mississippi Baptists provide.

At First Church, Water Valley, Reedy said the contractor told him it would take about \$2 million to rebuild. He said they had good insurance. But at a quickly called deacons' meeting on a porch across from the church, the question was how to find a place for Sunday School. At 11 that Easter morning, about 50 members met on the debris-littered parking lot for a word of thanksgiving that the loss of lives was so small considering the damage done and, according to Reedy, thank God "for his power to be with us and sustain us even in the face of tragedy."

Stuckey resigns as Iowa chief

By Bob Terry

DES MOINES, Iowa (BP)—Robert H. Stuckey, executive director-treasurer of the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship, resigned.

His resignation came two days after the Fellowship's administrative committee voted 11-0 not to express confidence in Stuckey's ability to lead the state or oversee the affairs of the Fellowship. Although the administrative committee has no authority to dismiss the executive director, Stuckey acknowledged his resignation was prompted by the committee's action.

According to Administrative Committee Chairman Mike McKinney, pastor of Ashworth Road Baptist Church in West Des Moines, the administrative committee spent almost 10 hours in session before reaching its unanimous conclusion.

"We finally decided the information available to us indicated Bob Stuckey had lost his 'fellowship' within our state," McKinney said.

The administrative committee's vote of no confidence came only two weeks after the same committee upheld Stuckey's dismissal of Missions Division Director David Morgan. However, McKinney insisted the two incidents were unrelated.

Stuckey, who was elected to the Iowa position in October 1981, told *Word and Way* (the Missouri Baptist newspaper) "too many decisions are left to the discretion of the executive director. "Our newly developing state organization operates with inadequate policies and guidelines to protect the executive director from administrative and judgment errors," he said.

(Terry edits the Missouri *Word and Way*.)



At right, National Guardsmen take a Monday breakfast at the Baptist disaster unit set up in the heart of the destruction in Water Valley. More photos on page 8. (More photos on page 6)

Kansas Citians minister in Baptist convention city

By Sandy Anthony

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)—The Kansas City area is nearing 1.5 million in population, pushing outward in all directions. With growth comes change, and with that change comes the need for Southern Baptists to alter and expand their ministry programs.

Churches in the Kansas City area are armed with the resources of three Baptist associations, a Baptist seminary, college and hospital. Together, these institutions have quite an impact.

For instance:

• In Oak Grove, Mo., east of Kansas City local church members voluntarily staff the chaplain's office at the busy Oak Grove Truck Stop.

Volunteers from local churches were trained to minister to truck drivers, but soon found themselves ministering also to vacationers, transients, local residents and truck

stop employees. They distribute Bibles and tracts and keep a log of all contacts they make.

Ken Taylor, director of Christian social and special ministries for Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association, is excited about truck stop ministry. "During the first month, the volunteers led a trucker from Pennsylvania to the Lord," Taylor said. "We contacted a Baptist church in his hometown to follow up on the man's decision."

Volunteers hope to staff the chaplain's office 24 hours a day.

• Arcade ministry is another unusual ministry program designed for people who frequent video arcades. In the midst of flashing lights, buzzes and beeps, local church members befriend and witness to people caught up in the excitement of video games.

Ellen Riffe, a divinity student at

Midwestern Seminary, pioneered the arcade ministry program in Kansas City.

Riffe believes there is tremendous potential in arcade ministry. In "Arcade Ministry Manual" Riffe writes, "Nearly all ages have come to know Christ, including a little four-year-old girl who was hardly able to reach the Pac-Man game to a 30-year-old divorced woman with two children whose lifestyle has been changed by salvation, friendship, and Bible study—all a result of the arcade ministry."

According to Riffe, as many as 15 to 20 local churches have adopted neighborhood video arcades and minister to arcade visitors by witnessing, leaving tracts and befriending them.

• Covenant Baptist Church in downtown Kansas City is dedicated to ministering to the needs of transients and street people. As many as 150 transients crowd into Covenant Baptist Church every Sunday morning at 7:30 for coffee, doughnuts, and companionship.

Church members talk with the street people and befriend them. Some break into small groups for a prayer time and others eat, enjoy the warmth of the church and leave. "All who come to the fellowship are invited to attend the Sunday morning worship service," says Darrell Rickard, pastor of Covenant Baptist Church. "Forty to 60 usually stay for our morning service. The response has been very positive. We're rebuilding bridges that have been broken down through the years."

The church is in the process of renovating an old apartment building to house street people who become Christians and are serious about changing their lives.

• Other programs for single adults, senior adults, handicapped persons, ethnic groups, youth, and shut-ins are active throughout the Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association. Resort ministries, literacy missions, disaster relief programs, and emergency assistance programs also operate in the area.

Clay-Platte Baptist Association stretches from northern Kansas City to St. Joseph, Mo. The association stays busy trying to meet technical, specialized needs of urban churches while also assisting rural churches with basic needs.

Bob Perry, director of missions for Clay-Platte Baptist Association since March 1, 1984, plans to strengthen and intensify existing ministry in multi-family dwellings and resort areas and increase training for disaster relief teams in addition to providing general support and assistance for churches.

Kansas City (Kansas) Baptist Association also encompasses rural and urban areas. The association supports special programs for seven ethnic groups, a local truck stop and a deaf congregation, a prison ministry and a hunger program.

"Below budget" report produces some optimism

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Midpoint in its fiscal year, the unified national giving program of the Southern Baptist Convention lags behind budget. Yet optimism is being expressed.

October through March the 37 state conventions, which voluntarily relate to the national SBC, contributed \$53,957,213 to support the worldwide mission and educational work of the 14.1 million member denomination. That is 6.16 percent (\$3.1 million) above the 1982-83 pace.

The 1983-84 operating budget is \$114.5 million, and the total budget is \$125 million.

"I think 'below budget' is much more accurate than 'shortfall' because we are doing very well against the inflation rate—it was our budget planning that didn't anticipate the dramatic drop in the inflation rate," Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, said.

"People from many other denominations are asking us how we are doing so well."

What the Cooperative Program is doing is running about two percent ahead of the inflation rate—because 21 of the 37 state conventions have increased their gifts to the national program by more than four percent over last year.

March 1984 receipts at the national level are the second highest month in the history of the Cooperative Program. The \$9,620,987 is the sixth time the monthly total has broken the \$9 million mark. January 1984 (10,233,923) is the top month.

The March total is more than \$1.2 million higher than the March 1983 figure.

To reach the basic operating budget, receipts would have to average approximately \$10.1 million for the final six months.

In addition to the almost \$54 million in undesignated gifts to the national Cooperative Program since last May, the 36,500 churches which are affiliated with the SBC have contributed more than \$57 million in designated offerings—\$50.2 million to the convention's Foreign Mission Board. Designated gifts are 5.19 percent (\$2.75 million) ahead of 1982-83.

Florida is the only state to rank in the top ten in both dollar giving and percentage increase over last year. Florida is third in both categories—15.96 percent ahead of 1982-83 with gifts of \$4,176,719.

Other percentage increase leaders are West Virginia, 35.22; Hawaii, 29.24; Kansas-Nebraska, 12.75; Nevada, 12.64; Arizona, 11.01; Arkansas, 10.02; Michigan, 9.64; Illinois, 9.4; and California, 8.86.

Other conventions which are surpassing the inflation rate are Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

Other total dollar leaders are Texas, \$9,505,878; Georgia, \$4,682,868; North Carolina \$3,742,662; Alabama, \$3,605,919; Oklahoma, \$3,549,972; Tennessee, \$3,192,107; South Carolina, \$3,061,529; Mississippi, \$2,672,973, and Louisiana, \$2,517,075.

Other conventions which have given more than \$1 million to the national programs during the first six months of the fiscal year are Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Virginia.

Sunday services are held at Leavenworth Federal Prison and Kansas State Penitentiary, according to Steve Aycock, mission action/ministries consultant for Kansas City, Kan., Baptist Association. A special service for Spanish-speaking inmates at Leavenworth attracts 40-45 inmates each Sunday. In the past year, more than 60 inmates made professions of faith.

Wyandotte Ministry provides assistance for the poor and hungry. Local churches furnish food and volunteers to help run the ministry, now in its third year.

Since its founding in 1957, Midwestern Seminary has emerged as a leader in preparing students for service in missions. More than 725 students representing 37 states and nine foreign countries attended Midwestern during the 1983-84 school year.

More than half of the student body works in area churches. Each year during spring break, student teams travel throughout the Midwest building churches, leading revivals, surveying, ministering through drama.

William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., with 1,400 students recently celebrated its sesquicentennial. Charles Spurgeon's personal library is kept at the college.

The Baptist Medical Center, located in south-central Kansas City, is a non-profit acute care health center.

(Sandy Anthony is a member of the publicity committee of the SBC Local Arrangements Committee for 1984.)

Area meetings for preaching

Three area conferences May 21, 22, and 23 are planned to help worship leaders give their congregations better biblical preaching and worship experiences.

The three will include sessions on creative worship, the planning team, elements of worship, planning for a dynamic worship service, developing a preaching plan, invitations, and enriching worship through the ordinances.

Each conference will include time for a workshop on sermon preparation.

Leaders for the conferences will be Dan Hall, and Leon Emery, directors of the Church Music and Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries departments, respectively, of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; James Barry of the Baptist Sunday School Board, and Larry Fields, pastor of Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.

Locations of the conferences will be May 21 at the Covington-Jeff Davis Associational Office in Prentiss; May 22 at Emmanuel Church, Greenwood; and May 23 at East Heights Church, Tupelo. Each session begins at 8:30 a.m., includes lunch, and concludes at 4 p.m.

There is no cost for these conferences which are sponsored by the MBCB. Participants need to register, though, by writing Leon Emery at Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205, stating the location you plan to attend.

In France there are about 1 million non-Catholic Christians, leaving over 50 million people who are unchurched and unsaved. — The Commission.

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FORM MS-100

PLAN 1

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Faces And Places

by anne washburn mcwilliams

J. B. Smith

"I've never known a minister in whom I had more confidence than I do in J. B. Smith," once wrote the father of former Mississippi governor, J. P. Coleman. I can understand how he felt. J. B. Smith has long been on my list of most esteemed and admired ministers. It was with deep sadness that I received a message delivered by Gordon Shamburger on April 17 that Brother Smith had died that day, at age 83.

During the 50s, when he was a member of the Baptist Convention Board, he would often stop in the Baptist Record office to chat with Eleanor Smith and me. In February of this year, she and I drove one day to Ackerman, to visit him and his wife at 176 Church Street. His curly hair was still black and his blue eyes were still sparkling with fun and good humor. Later, in one column I mentioned our visit. He wrote to me: "Come again soon and we will have more homemade butter and homemade bread. Our friend brought a loaf yesterday and Bennie Wade had just made a loaf. You stated that I'm a good storyteller. I asked my wife if that could mean a good liar. She said that's it!"

I noticed pictures of deer on the living room wall. "I like eating primitive," he said, "deer meat, squirrel and dumplings, coon, chitterlings. . . I grew up in the wild Delta, in Sunflower County."

John Bryant Smith was born in Drew Nov. 1, 1900, reared near Indianola, baptized at Fairview Church, Indianola. As a boy he hunted black bear, deer, coons, ducks. "You orta been born an Indian!" his mother told him, "you like to hunt so well!" Some years later, he and Chester Quarles on occasion went deer hunting together. And I remember Dr. Quarles telling us about having his shirt tail cut off by J. B. Smith the time when he didn't kill a deer. "A Christian deer camp can have a great good influence on men," said Brother Smith.

"As far as I have been able to find, I was the first preacher both born and raised in the Delta. There have been many since. My father, Tommy Smith, Choctaw County native, was a pioneer preacher and organized a lot of churches."

He added, "When we went to church in the early days, the Sunday night service time was not set. People said, 'We'll meet at early candlelight.'

Brother J. B. had completed the manuscript of a book and J. P. Col-

eman, who also lives at Ackerman, is having it published. It should be out some time this summer. I can hardly wait to read it! It contains some autobiographical material. "It has funny things in it and also helpful truths—some history," Smith said.

The book is titled *Eleven of Life's Grounds*, and chapter titles are "Delta Ground," "New Ground," "State Ground," "Higher Ground," "Good Ground," "Church Ground," etc. It contains his favorite sermon, "Every Person's Problem," on Heb. 2:3, and gives points from one black preacher's sermon on the text, "Lo, he stinketh. . . ." Also it includes advice on how to build a church.

"How did you meet your wife?" I asked him.

"A flood sent her in my direction. I had a date over in Tate County, but the water got high on one of the streams and I couldn't get through to her house, so I got a date with somebody else—Bennie Wade Davis, in Sardis. Joel Sturdivant introduced us." Then the day he and Bennie Wade were going to get married at the church in Sardis, he had a new suit from The Hub in Jackson, but he had forgotten to buy the marriage license and had to get somebody to open up the office to let him buy it on Sunday.

In boarding school at Moorhead Agricultural High, he paid his way by sweeping and mopping. At Mississippi College (Class of 1926), he waited on tables. "I took pre-med, German, Spanish, Latin, because I wanted to be a doctor. Yet all the time I felt like the Lord was calling me to preach. So I did." Some years later, he said, a grandson, Chris, reversed this pattern. He wanted to be a preacher, like his grandfather, but never felt that the Lord was calling him to be one; instead, he became a doctor.

"When Bennie Wade and I got to Southern Seminary we had one child, a baby bed, a folding table, two chairs, and \$58.00." Sometimes he would get discouraged, he said, and would think, "What am I doing here?" Then one day he saw a foreign student struggling to learn English in order to study at the seminary, and he said to himself, "What does a depression matter? I've been in a depression all my life! I'm no poorer now than ever. We can make it. The Lord will help us."

When he was pastor at Hollandale he baptized his son, James. Now James is pastor at Hollandale. Twice he served at Ackerman. "Two things I said I'd never do—I said I'd never



J. B. and Bennie Wade Smith

go back to a church where I've been pastor before, and I said I'd never retire and live where I'd been pastor, and I did both." In his 58 years of preaching, other churches he served as pastor were Abbeville; Blythe Creek; Chester; Cascilla; Money; Mackville, Ky.; First, Magee; and (after a stroke in 1961 and semi-retirement in 1965) at Fentress; French Camp; and Coila. For a couple of years he was alumni secretary and treasurer at Mississippi College.

After I wrote a column about Dewey Metts, Brother Smith wrote me that Dewey and his late brother, Ira, were friends of his. "Once I drove to Dewey's home and I found him quite ill. He said, 'No, I'm not going to the hospital.' I knew he had to go and told his wife to get his things together. I loaded him in my car and took him to the hospital. This is the time you refer to that he almost died after surgery."

Brother Smith served on the Executive Committee and Personnel Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and as chairman of the temperance committee of the state convention. Also he was on a committee that did a special study of Mississippi Baptist Seminary.

His children, besides James, included two sons and a daughter. John Bryant Jr., professor at MUW, was killed several years ago when a sniper fired into a crowd. Bill is in insurance in Greenwood. Marjorie Thornell lives in Clinton, and is a member of my church, Morrison Heights. There are ten grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Three of the grandchildren are also members at Morrison Heights, and one great-granddaughter, Kristi Bishop, was baptized there a short time ago.

J. B. Smith was a great friend, a great preacher, a great man—and I will miss him.

J. B. Smith, minister, dies

ACKERMAN—John Bryant Smith, 83, died Tuesday, April 17, in Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson. Services were 11 a.m. Thursday, April 19, at Ackerman Baptist Church with graveside services at 3 p.m. in Lakewood Memorial Park in Jackson.

A retired Baptist minister, Smith was a member of Ackerman Baptist Church, the Masons and a former member of Ackerman Rotary Club. He was a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He had served as pastor at several churches, including Ackerman Church, First Church of

Thursday, April 26, 1984

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

Court will decide 'moment-of-silence'

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court has reopened the 22-year-old debate over the proper place of religion in public school classrooms by agreeing to rule on an Alabama law providing for a moment of silent prayer or meditation at the beginning of the school day.

At the same time, the high court affirmed a lower federal court in striking down a separate Alabama law authorizing classroom teachers to lead their pupils in oral prayers.

Combined, the two actions indicate the nation's highest tribunal, while standing firmly by its 1962 and 1963 decisions barring state-prescribed school prayer, is now willing to consider the silent prayer alternative as enacted by Alabama and 21 other states. The Supreme Court has never considered the question until now.

Lower federal courts have divided, one tribunal upholding a Massachusetts silence statute, but others striking down similar laws in Tennessee, New Jersey, and Alabama.

The Alabama law the high court will consider reads: "At the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in all public schools, the teacher in charge of the room in which such class is held may announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration shall be observed for meditation or voluntary prayer, and during any such period no other activities shall be engaged in."

After the state legislature passed the law, a group of Mobile, Ala., parents led by Ishmael Jaffree, an agnostic with three children in public schools, challenged it. But U.S. District Court Judge Brevard Hand last year upheld the law in an opinion

According to the 1980 Census, Hispanics represent 14.6 million of 6.4 percent of the total U.S. population—62 percent increase over the 1970 figure of 9.1 million. Census breakdowns estimate that 9 million are of Mexican origin, 2.3 million Puerto Rican on the Mainland (another 3 million on the island), one million Cuban, and 2.25 million Central and South American. Almost one-fourth of all Hispanics live in the inner city.

—Missions U.S.A.

which said the Supreme Court had misinterpreted the Constitution in its 1962 and 1963 school prayer decisions.

On appeal to a federal circuit court, however, the law was struck down as a violation of the First Amendment's establishment clause.

Because the Supreme Court's calendar for hearing cases in its current term is already full, the Alabama case will not be argued until sometime after the 1984-85 term begins next October. A decision is expected by the spring of 1985.

While agreeing to decide on the silent prayer issue, the high court nevertheless voted without dissent to affirm the appeals court decision striking down the Alabama law providing for teacher-led prayers.

That statute, also challenged by Jaffree, authorized but did not require teachers to lead "willing" students in oral prayers. In enacting the law, the Alabama legislature suggested a prayer composed by the son of former Governor Fob James.

Judge Hand, in upholding the law, attracted national attention by accusing the Supreme Court of ignoring the intent of Congress by applying the establishment clause to the states. States, unlike the federal government, he said, are free under the Constitution to enact official religions if they wish.

But the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals overturned Hand's ruling, declaring the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution makes applicable to the states the constraints on the federal government set forth in the First Amendment. (83-812, Wallace v. Jaffree; 83-929, Smith v. Jaffree; 83-804, Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, Ala. v. Jaffree).

(Haste writes for the Baptist Joint Committee.)

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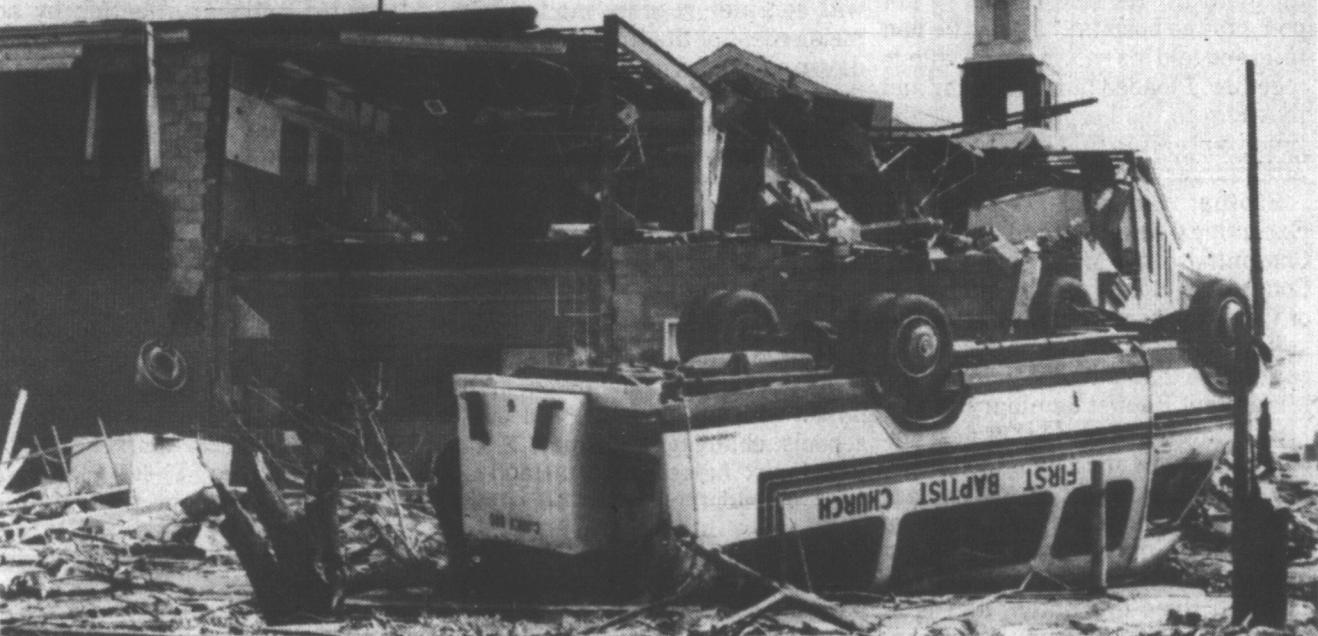
The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit set up in the parking lot of a Church of Christ. Behind is some of the debris where stores stood the day before.—(Photos on this page by Tim Nicholas).



Red Cross volunteer Frank Marquis talks with Jim Didlake, Baptist disaster unit coordinator concerning food supplies. Marquis is a member of Midway Baptist Church, Jackson, and took vacation days to help in mass care after the disaster.



Wayne Eubanks, a member of First Church, Ackerman, volunteered to do patch work on his mobile ham radio unit, helping distraught relatives determine where people were. Eubanks and his son, Wayne, worked through Saturday night.



The church van of First Baptist Church, Water Valley, lies inverted behind the destroyed buildings of the church. Preliminary estimates were that the entire facility was unsalvageable.



This car belongs to William Hodge, a bivocational Baptist minister whose house was destroyed in the tornado that hit Water Valley Saturday afternoon. Hodge helped a woman find her way to the woman's elderly parents just after the storm hit.



Guy Reedy (facing camera), pastor of First Church, Water Valley, holds a deacons' meeting Easter on a porch across the street from the tornado ravaged church.

ACTS leaders to borrow start-up money, buy shows

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—A funding strategy to guarantee the first year of operation of the American Christian Television System has been set in motion by trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

The trustees authorized the commission staff to negotiate a line of credit up to \$4.3 million to meet the immediate needs of starting the TV network, which will begin May 15 delivering family Christian entertainment programs to American homes daily through television stations and cable TV systems.

Also at the meeting, trustees approved the purchase of \$2.3 million worth of programs for the network and elected as chairman John E. Roberts, editor of the *Baptist Courier*, newsjournal of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

The line of credit, which will pay for equipment, production of programs and operating expenses for the network, will be repaid with money already pledged to the commission over the next three years and other resources brought in by the commission's development program.

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention has allocated \$2 million over the next five years for the commission's capital needs, but Commission President Jimmy R. Allen explained the equipment is needed now.

"We have put together the start-up money for our first year of broadcasting," Allen said of the trustee action. "This gives us the working capital we need for the next year of production

and \$1.7 million for immediate capital needs."

The equipment to be purchased will improve and enlarge the commission's studio and editing facilities, plus provide a mobile camera unit for videotaping on location. The capital needs funding will also enlarge the commission's mail center, tripling its capacity to keep up with the increased mail response expected from ACTS.

Allen said supporters have already pledged \$2.8 million of the start-up money to the network. "We're going to raise the whole \$4.3 million," he said. "There is about \$2 million we still have to enlist."

"Once on the air, ACTS will produce its own revenue and pay for itself," Allen said. "The challenge has been to provide the product, in the form of a TV network, to let us get started. We have solved our cash flow problem with this line of credit."

The trustees initially considered borrowing only \$3.2 million, but Fred Roach, president of Centennial Homes, Dallas, suggested they seek the full amount needed. "I'm not against borrowing \$4.3 million if we have to do it to get the job done," he said.

The trustees also approved a revaluation of the commission's assets, now placed at \$14 million by its auditors. The new figure shows a \$3.7 million increase in program inventory, reflecting the market value of TV programs the commission has in stock but which it had never counted as assets. The revaluation will help the commission secure the \$4.3 million

line credit line, trustees were told.

The commission will purchase \$2.3 million worth of religious and alternative programs, all less than 10 years old, from Exclusive International Pictures Inc. of Vincennes, Ind. The total includes \$1.8 million for unlimited use of 400 religious programs (including dramatic series, cartoons and feature films) for 10 years. The alternative package will cost \$500,000 for unlimited use of 1,250 programs for six years.

Most of these are 30-minute episodes of comedy and drama series, including "The Melting Pot," a cooking program starring Orson Bean, and "The Bill Cosby Show."

The commission will make monthly payments for the programs. Bob Taylor, vice president of production for the Radio and Television Commission, said the purchase will give ACTS dramatic programming it could not afford to produce itself.

"This acquired programming will not be a dominant element on the network, but will be supportive of our own original programs," Taylor said. "We will not load prime time with this, but I can sprinkle it in instead of repeating our basic programs several times a day."

Other Baptist agencies are involved in producing programs for ACTS, Allen said. The Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board will bring missionaries in to appear on "Life Today," a daily live talk show hosted by Allen. The boards will coordinate the appearances with their study curricula.

Allen reported April 12 pledges and gifts will soon top \$2 million from 43 dinner rallies sponsored by the commission. A series of private luncheons with potential contributors will follow the dinner meetings to seek additional support for ACTS.

In addition to the election of Roberts as chairman, the trustees chose Clark Hensley, retired executive director of the Christian Action Commission for the Mississippi Baptist Convention, as recording secretary.

And what so tedious as a twice-told tale.—Homer—Odyssey

Credentials committee for 1984 SBC is named

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The 28-member credentials committee for the 1984 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 12-14 in Kansas City, Mo., has been named by SBC President James T. Draper Jr.

The committee includes one Mississippian, David Michel, pastor of Prentiss Baptist Church, Prentiss.

Draper had earlier announced the chairman of the group, R. Earl Allen, pastor of Rosen Heights Church, Fort Worth, Tex. The 27 other members include five current state convention presidents and four former state convention presidents. Nine have

Thursday, April 26, 1984

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

International church is just that

DAKAR, Senegal—International Baptist Church of Dakar, Senegal, lived up to its name during a recent baptismal service. Six men from four nations—The Gambia, Ghana, Senegal and Togo—were baptized. They ranged in age from 20 to 50, and in occupation from administrator to farmer. Two from Muslim backgrounds first heard the gospel through the church's Serer-speaking mission to Muslims.

Radio-TV commission has \$2.7 million pledged

(Continued from page 2) watched the program locally on large-screen TV sets, \$12 million has been spent so far on the network. However, more is needed, he said, to keep ACTS on target for its May 15 launch.

"We have a problem of success," Allen said. "We planned to build the network slowly. But folks are anxious to see it and we have to move quickly to do everything that has to be done."

John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston, and preacher for ACTS' "Invitation to Life" evangelistic program, challenged the participants to "help get the network off the ground. We're in a crisis," he said. "We have to have about \$4.3 million in the next couple of years."

Bisagno explained the appeal was a one-time effort. Once on the air, he said, ACTS will generate its own revenue and be self-perpetuating. "After a year or two, there will be no need to ask for additional funds," he said. The network will never ask for money on the air, he said.

Bisagno reported his own church members have contributed \$155,000 to ACTS, pledged \$200,000, plus another \$200,000 over a five-year period.

"We're on the precipice of launching the single most powerful tool to win the world to Jesus Christ," Bisagno said. "This will be a catalyst to everything else we are doing."

Bisagno said the Southern Baptist network will not feature a personality but the local church. SBC President James T. Draper Jr., who also appeared on the program, said ACTS will bring attention and people to churches.

The Fort Worth dinner meeting reported the highest pledge total, with

71 people promising \$219,655 to the effort. Fort Worth also had the largest single pledge of \$100,000. Dallas was the second highest reporting site, with participants pledging \$129,205.

The satellite broadcast, which was delivered by Holiday Inn's HiNet telecommunications system, mixed live interviews and entertainment with videotaped excerpts from most of the 30-plus Acts programs. Hosts of the various shows were introduced to participants, who included Baptists and non-Baptists.

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(Continued from page 2)

had plagued him for years.

Green refused an interview with the *Baptist Standard*. Scott Fisher, the coordinator of the Green seminars, said Green wanted to avoid controversy. "We're not in this for controversy," Fisher said. "We are in it for the glory of Jesus."

Fisher, who said he has known Green 10 years, confirmed Green has been married three times. "Before he was saved in 1973 he had been divorced twice," Fisher said.

Other facts are gleaned from seminar tapes. He was a carpet cleaner in Cleveland, Tenn., and has a ninth grade education. He underwent heart surgery and contends he was told by a doctor he had no chances to survive and that the surgery was not completed.

The *Dallas Morning News*, in an article June 12, 1983, however, quotes Green's physician, Fred Ballard of Chattanooga, Tenn., that "everything was done as planned" during the surgery. He said: "I don't recall anything about him not being complete."

Robison's contact came during a meeting led by Jim Hylton, pastor of Lake Country Church, Fort Worth.

Hylton came into contact with Green in New Albany, Ind., in 1980 during a protracted meeting at Graceland Baptist Church. It was Hylton who two years ago brought Green to a conference being led by Jack Taylor, former vice president of the SBC.

The first Green seminar reportedly was conducted a couple of months later and the proliferation has continued.

Fisher said seminars, which cost \$40, featured Green lecturing almost non-stop for nearly three days. The central focus is Green, mainly quoting the Scripture and commenting on it. Green allows no questions, Fisher said, adding Robison and evangelist Dudley Hall usually joined a seminar on the second day to answer questions.

One critic says Green allows no questions because he is intimidated by anyone who challenges him, especially anyone with a theological education.

Critics cite Green for seeing demons "in every bush," teaching that physical healing was secured for Christians on the cross—and an anti-local church, anti-pastor sentiment.

(Continued next week)

(Toby Druin is associate editor of the Texas Baptist Standard.)

worked on the credentials committee at previous SBC meetings.

The committee primarily deals with any person who comes to the convention with improper credentials or with no credentials and wants to register as a messenger, Lee Porter, registration secretary for the SBC, said. Messengers who come with their registration cards properly filled out do not have to see the credentials committee before being issued their voting packet.

Cards may be secured from the state convention offices and, in some cases, from associational offices and must be signed by either the church clerk or the pastor.



Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record.

"When the roll . . ."

Editor:

On April 8 I presented a piano concert at my home church, First Church, Crystal Springs. A storm hit right at service time and it was hailing, thundering, lightening, and raining. I was half through the concert and was playing an arrangement of "God Will Take Care of You" when a man walked the length of the aisle and whispered to Joel Haire, the pastor. The minister of music's wife ran from the sanctuary, the pastor whispered to someone else and finally came to the piano. As I continued playing "God Will Take Care of You" he announced to the congregation that a tornado had been sighted heading our way and that we must evacuate the sanctuary. I continued playing while the people quietly and orderly filed to the church basement.

After 15 minutes or so we assembled in the auditorium again and I was asked to resume the concert. Not only was it my first experience of having everyone walk out of one of my programs—but the next selection was "When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder I'll Be There."

Thought you might enjoy this. Thanks for the good work you are doing. I came from Mississippi to Texas as a "foreign missionary" and we sent you from Texas to Mississippi to do the same.

Sylvia Green
Music Assistant/Organist
East Grand Baptist Church
Dallas, Texas

Music history needs

Editor:

The Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board continues to work toward the printing of a history of Baptist church music in Mississippi. The publication date is November, 1984.

The committee working on this project has had much cooperation from many in the state who have provided valuable information. However, we do not want to omit any important information; and we are again requesting that any additional materials be sent to us before May 15. Any photos, articles, or stories about outstanding leader and churches would be welcomed.

Specifically, we need a copy of "The Southern Minstrel" written by L. J. Jones (Jasper County). This book was written around 1855 and is in the four-shaped note style. Also, we would like to know of hymnals purchased by churches prior to 1900. This information can be found in church minutes. We need the names of any published music by Mississippi authors before 1900 in the shaped note style.

Mississippi church history is rich in musical heritage, and we would

like to preserve as much as possible. Any materials that space will not allow to be printed will be housed in the archives at Mississippi College.

Gwen Keys Hitt,
Project Coordinator
Church Music Department
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205

Correction for Brookhaven

Editor:

The information found on pages 330 and 332 of the 1983 annual of the Mississippi Baptist Convention regarding First Baptist Church of Brookhaven contains several errors. I consulted my church letter and discovered that the person who prepared it for our church made the errors.

On behalf of the good people in this church, allow me to correct the record. During 1983, we gave more than \$120,000 to missions of all types and \$72,554 through the Cooperative Program. We averaged 650 in Sunday School.

I want to emphasize that the errors originated in our report and not in our convention office. Thank you for allowing me to correct this matter.

Robert E. Self, pastor
First Church
Brookhaven

The gravel bills

Editor:

The churches of Mississippi have been named in a bill that will come before the full House soon. This bill is called the "Gravel Bill" and has received much attention and controversy in the last two months or so.

Several "Gravel Bills" were introduced in the legislature the first few weeks of this session, but did not pass. Now the House County Affairs Committee has passed a bill that uses the churches in the title of the bill. This bill would attempt to make it legal to use tax money, labor, and equipment to improve church property. Of course, this bill if passed by the full House and Senate, would be unconstitutional but I don't know of anyone in Mississippi who would challenge it in Court except possibly the ACLU.

I have noted in your editorials that you are for separation of church and state, so I have wondered why you have not opposed this obvious attempt to use the churches to pass a bill to legalize this graft and corruption which has increased at an alarming

rate in the last several years.

Don O. Simmons
McComb

The answer is very simple. We just do not have enough people, or enough time because there are not enough people, to do everything that we would like to do or even that we think should be a necessity. The lack of people means the editor doesn't go home at quitting time, nor does the work stop when he gets home. That is not to ask for martyr status but to answer your question as simply as possible. We wish we could give more attention to more issues. We just run out of time. By the way, I am sure you noticed that all of the gravel bills failed. We can be grateful for that.

Yes, I am for separation of church and state; and I am also against the proliferation of liquor. That was also apparent in editorials, of course; but we had little opportunity to give attention to one liquor bill that was designed to allow the sale of alcohol in the portion of dry Lamar County that has Hattiesburg suburbs in it.—Editor.

Missionaries robbed

DAVAO CITY, Philippines—Armed thieves broke into the home of missionaries Glen and Marcella Thompson in early March and stole nearly \$27,000 worth of property. While the Thompsons were away, three men and women aimed guns at seminary students staying in the house and carried away radios, jewelry, appliances, camera and stereo equipment and other items. Two armed men stood guard at the gate.

The Thompsons, from Texas, have lost six dogs to poisoning in seven robberies during the past two years. He is in music promotion at the Mindanao Baptist Seminary in Davao City.

MC choir to present concert

The Mississippi College Concert Choir will present its spring concert on April 29 at 2 p.m. in Provine Chapel on the Mississippi College campus. There is no admission charge.

Included in the program will be "The Songs of Nature" by Anton Dvorak and Parts II and III of "The Messiah" by G. F. Handel.

Mississippi Baptist activities

Apr 29

Senior Adult Week (CT Emphasis)

May 6

State Bible Drills; Registration 3-4:30 p.m.; FBC, Batesville/FBC, Baldwyn (CT)

Apr. 30

State Bible Drills; Registration 3-4:30 p.m.; FBC, Columbus/FBC, Greenville (CT)

May 1

"Reach, Involve, Teach" Meeting; 7-9:30 p.m.; FBC, Yazoo City (SS)

May 3

State Bible Drills; Registration 3-4:30 p.m.; FBC, Kosciusko/FBC, Pascagoula (CT)

May 4

State Bible Drills; Registration 3-4:30 p.m.; Temple BC, Hattiesburg/Poplar Springs Drive BC, Meridian (CT)

May 4-5

Chaplains Retreat; Gulfshore; 5 p.m., 4th-3 p.m., 5th (CoMi)

May 5

State Bible Drills; 2-5 p.m.; Colonial Heights BC, Jackson/Alta Woods BC, Jackson (CT)

'Better than all . . . other kinds'

By Joe McKeever

My brother pastors an independent Baptist Church in Alabama. It's an outstanding, mission-minded church in many areas.

But the missionaries they support have a burden which Southern Baptist missionaries do not have: they have to raise their own financial support.

On their furloughs to the states, they visit their supporting churches to keep their interest active. While they're on the mission field, they spend a good bit of time writing letters back home to keep the support coming.

Because of the regular giving of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program, we are spared that ordeal. Our missionaries give their time to the work for which they went in the first place.

Winston Churchill used to say of democracy: "It's a terrible form of government. But it's better than all those other kinds." That's just about where many of us are regarding the Cooperative Program: it has serious flaws, but it's still better than any other way!

(Joe McKeever is pastor of First Church, Columbus.)

-Names in the News-



CROWDER CHURCH, Quitman Association, licensed JEFF SHAW, left, to the gospel ministry on March 4. Harvey Sewell, pastor, right, presented the certificate of license.

Mrs. Sara Bellamy Myers, 69, died April 14 in Jeff Davis Extended Care at Prentiss. Funeral services were held at 10 a.m. April 16 at Mims-Mitchell Funeral Home in Magee with Oliver Ladnier and John E. Barnes Jr. officiating. She was a member of First Baptist Church, Magee. A native of Franklin, Ky., she was a retired school teacher. She is survived by her daughter, Mrs. Ginger Barnes of Prentiss; son, Clinton Frank "Buz" Myers of Oxford; mother, Mrs. B. H. Lovelace of Clinton; sister, Grace Lovelace of Clinton, long-time employee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and two grandchildren. Her late father, B. H. Lovelace, was a former pastor of First Church, Clinton, and her son-in-law, John E. Barnes III, is pastor of Antioch Church, Jeff Davis County.

Mike Warnke, gospel comedian, will be in concert on May 1 at 7 p.m. at Monticello Football Field, Monticello. He is best known for his former involvement as a satan high priest, as a drug addict-pushers and as a Marine Corps medic. He shares his life stories to convey the Bible-based appeal for Christian salvation.

Homecomings

Pine Grove Church (Simpson): homecoming; April 29; annual Pine Grove Cemetery Association to meet in the afternoon; dinner on the grounds; Douglas Hogg, pastor, preaching at the morning service; Andy Hughes, leading the singing.

Bethesda Church (Oktibbeha): April 29; homecoming; covered dish dinner; special music in the afternoon; John Barrow, who was pastor at the church in the early '40's, to preach for the morning worship service.

Harmony (Carroll): homecoming; April 29; Luther Lindsey, pastor, bringing the morning message; lunch to be spread on tables under large oak trees; cemetery business to be discussed in afternoon meeting, and The Gospel Travelers' Quartet of Jackson to sing; (see "Revival Dates.")

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Fort Worth 'Dayspring' attracts 2,800 women

By Jerilynn Armstrong

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Dayspring, a national meeting on lifestyle evangelism, climaxed last weekend with 2,800 Baptist women making a covenant to pray daily for worldwide spiritual awakening.

Jointly sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, and Woman's Missionary Union, the three-day meeting was the same format as the meeting held at Ridgecrest Conference Center last fall. Each conference attracted more than 2,800 women.

Laura Allen, national evangelism consultant with women at the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, challenged the women to become verbal witnesses. "Each of us is called to live a Christian life, but we also are called to be a verbal witness. Growing in our spiritual walk leads us to naturally share with others.

"I have discovered the Lord provides us witnessing opportunities in the midst of our routine if we are a prepared and willing vessel," she said.

Sharing five practical aspects of claiming the power and joy of salvation, Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Woman's Missionary Un-

ion, SBC, first told the women to give themselves to a person.

"Too often we give our first class commitments to second class causes," said Weatherford. "This involves spending time with the Lord because there is no effective 'going out' until we have been with him."

Weatherford then cited the importance of giving of yourself to others for Christ's sake, using ordinary things in one's life in an extraordinary way, giving proper perspective to one's possessions, and finding opportunities to be a verbal witness.

The last session's emphasis on spiritual awakening was highlighted by the testimony of Juana Ann Fort, medical missionary to Zimbabwe, and the group's commitment to pray daily for spiritual awakening.

Fort shared the amazing response of the Zimbabweans to the message of Christ in the midst of political upheaval and economic strain. "We are seeing people come forward in numbers not experienced by any of us on the field. It is thrilling," she said.

Standing and speaking in unison, the women made a covenant to pray daily at 11:55 a.m. for worldwide spiritual awakening in our time.

Jerilynn Armstrong writes for Texas Baptists.

Devotional Looking unto Jesus

By Ralph Culp, pastor, Central, Golden

"*Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith . . .*" (Hebrews 12:2).

In western Montana, the steep cliffs of the Sapphire Mountains meet the lofty slopes of the Mission Mountains, forming a deep and treacherous ravine known as Devil's Gorge. This pass was feared by the early settlers. Indian war parties hiding in the rocky cliffs would ambush wagon trains, kill the settlers, and leave their bodies for other wagon trains to find.

Pioneers said to travel through this gorge was like traveling through the gates of hell. There was no other pass available through those mountains to the fertile valleys beyond. They had to endure those adverse and awful circumstances to reach their goal. Many turned back in fear, but the successful settler overlooked the dangers and pressed onward.

Culp In our text, "to despise the shame" means to disregard or to count as nothing. In the garden, the Lord Jesus prayed concerning the bitter cup he was about to drink. He contemplated the cruel mockings of the Roman soldiers. He anticipated the animosity of the angry mob, yet he did not flinch. He did not fall back. He victoriously completed the work of Saviour.

Jesus endured the cruelties of crucifixion. He took upon his shoulders the condemnation of sin. He experienced the coldness of death. He totally disregarded the satanic struggles against him. He did not count these experiences worthy of worry. In great joy he looked ahead to a full and complete salvation for believers.

Even though Jesus totally disregarded these experiences in his own life; he took into full account each adverse situation that the believer shall endure and brought victory. Now, in Christ, we may joyfully sing:

"Though Satan should buffet, tho' trials should come

Let this blest assurance control,

That Christ has regarded my helpless estate
And hath shed his own blood for my soul."

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Thursday, April 26, 1984

Ramsey Pollard dies

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Ramsey Pollard, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, died Apr. 20 at the age of 81.

Pollard was pastor of the 12,000-member Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis from 1960 until his retirement in 1972.

An ordained minister for 60 years, he had been pastor-emeritus at Bellevue Baptist since 1979.

Over the years, he also served as the pastor of churches in Knoxville, Tenn.; Tampa, Fla.; Handley, Texas; and Fort Worth, Texas.

Most recently, he was interim pastor at Union Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis.

Pollard was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1960 and 1961.

Services were 10:30 a.m. Apr. 23 at Bellevue Baptist Church.

Enrollment up

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Enrollment at International Baptist Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, is up 30 percent over last year. The 156 students represent a record enrollment. "I am gratefully surprised that in a moment of (economic) crisis like we are living, so many young people, especially whole families, have accepted the Lord's challenge," said registrar Alicia Zorzoli.

Just for the Record



CALVARY CHURCH, GREENVILLE, held a GA recognition service during WMU Focus Week. The theme was "It's a Small World," and the girls dressed in costumes of various countries. Left to right, front row: Chastity Manor, Jennifer LaFoe, Keri Furr, Caydie Dover, Lee Ann Dorris, Latisha Powell. Back row: Beverly Downs, Karen Self, Brenda Hollingsworth, Tracy Dunn, Jennifer Furr, Kate Eubank. GA leaders are Melanie Adams and Linda Riley. GA director is Diane Walker. Mission Friends also helped out in the program. To carry out the theme they either dressed in costumes or displayed items they had made from other countries. Pictured in bottom photo are Betty Chesteen, WMU director, and Mission Friends, Mark Walker, Jason Powell, Stephanie Dorris, Jessica Flannigan, Pam Dorris, April Riley, and Kevin Carter. Marie Flannigan is the Mission Friends leader. Jimmy Furr is pastor.



"DEDICATING OUR HOMES, OUR CHURCH, and our lives to Jesus" is the theme of Riverside Church, Pascagoula, for April, May, and June. This theme was put into practice on April 1 with the dedication of a newly renovated fellowship-education building. The building, formerly the old sanctuary, was completely renovated under supervision of James L. Alexander, building chairman. The project, which began as an act of faith, is now debt free. The dedication service began at 2 p.m. with special guests, J. D. Lundy and H. L. Fewell, former pastors, and Allen Webb, Jackson County director of missions. Fewell brought the dedication message. Pastor of the Riverside Church is Terry L. Long. Left to right, in photo: Terry L. Long, James L. Alexander, J. D. Lundy, H. L. Fewell.



LAKEVIEW CHURCH, LELAND has established a children's choir for ages 6-11. Pictured are the children and the church minister of music and youth, Wayne Grothman.

Southside Church, Aberdeen's choir and children recently presented the musical play, "Down by the Creek Bank."

Glading Church, Amite County, held an Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. on April 22. Guest speaker was David Luce of Calvary Church, Smithdale. Charles Kirkfield is the Glading pastor.

Palestine Church, Simpson County, will present a spring concert of gospel music and old-fashioned hymns, at 6 p.m. on April 29 in the Palestine sanctuary. Sammy McDonald, minister of music and assistant pastor at Palestine, will direct the program, to be presented by the combined adult and youth and children's choirs.

Oakland Church, Corinth, has recently introduced a video teaching ministry, "Firm Foundations." The program will be seen in the Corinth area Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on Community Cable, Channel 12.

Pinecrest Church, at Plantation Shores in Rankin Association, will have a noteburning service on April 29 on the total debt of the 11-year-old congregation. The church owns seven acres and has both a mobile building and a permanent auditorium on the property. There are 100 members, and L. C. Newell is the pastor.

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Carey names Helen Phillips outstanding alumnus, 1984



President Noonkester presents award to Miss Phillips.

Staff Changes

Randy Scarbrough became the pastor of First Church, Marion, April 1. Scarbrough was former minister of ministries and activities at First, Meridian.

Edward Pendergrast is the new pastor of Glendale Church, Leland. He moved there from Second Church, Calhoun City. The new minister of music at Glendale is Rudon Lane.

Russell Louden has accepted the pastorate of Briarwood Drive Church, Jackson. He goes from New Orleans Seminary, where he received a master of divinity degree and has approximately one year's work toward his doctorate. Louden has served as pastor of First Church, Surfside, Tex. as interim pastor of Shifalo Church, Kiln. He has also served as a summer missionary, youth director, and counselor of students. He is married to Suzanne LeCren, formerly of Carthage. They have one daughter, Kristen.

First, Gulfport, has called Jimmy Stewart as youth director. He is a graduate of William Carey College and is a student at New Orleans Seminary.

Peter Fairley, who formerly served as minister of music and youth at North Winona Church, has joined the staff of Plainway Church, Laurel, as music and activities director. He was graduated from high school in Great Falls, Mont. He earned the bachelor of music degree at William Carey College and master of church music degree at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

First Church, Ripley, has called Jack B. Bennett as pastor. Bennett, a graduate of Southwestern Seminary, goes from an eight-year pastorate with Glendale Church, Alcorn Association. Bennett's wife, the former Becky Briscoe, is the former state Acteens director with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and is currently serving as dean of students at Blue Mountain College.

Biggersville Church (Alcorn) has called Truman and Elaine Stockdale to work with music and youth. Previously members of Oakland Church, Corinth, the Stockdales have served as music leaders on several revival teams.

Conrad Howell has resigned as minister of music and youth at First Church, Corinth, to become minister of music at First Church, Jasper, Ala.

Fernwood Church, Gulf Coast, has called James Mynard as minister of music.

Helen Maurice Phillips, a 1931 graduate of Mississippi Woman's College, was honored during homecoming activities at William Carey College by being named the 1984 "Outstanding Alumnus of the Year." Miss Phillips, a native of Shubuta, now lives in Meridian. At age eight, Helen Phillips developed polio. Despite this handicap and dislocation from family and friends for treatment, she never quit. Her desire to succeed took her to Mississippi Woman's College, where, by going to summer school, she completed a B.A. degree in three years and was graduated in 1931. From 1933 to 1937, Miss Phillips served as an active partner in a timber business. From 1947 to 1950, she served as a full partner in a wholesale lumber business and upon her father's death in 1950, continued the business, serving as executive manager. Since 1956, she has served in an advisory capacity as a tree farmer, and an independent bookkeeper for small businesses. Since 1974 she has worked for a Meridian medical clinic.

A member of First Baptist Church, Meridian, Miss Phillips has been a Sunday School teacher, WMU treasurer, and church historian. She has served as secretary and reporter for the Meridian Art Association, is a member of the Governor's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped, a member and past president of the Pilot Club of Meridian.

Members of the Alumni Association honored her at a reception held in Crawford Hall on the Carey campus.

George Abrams has announced his retirement as pastor of Sharon Church, Gulf Coast. He will be available as interim or supply pastor (telephone 864-2901).

Lone Oak Church (Alcorn) has called Stephen Cole of Henderson, Tenn., as pastor.



Belle Fountain burns note

Members of Belle Fountain Baptist Church in Ocean Springs held a note-burning ceremony recently to celebrate the completion of payments on the church's two educational buildings. The church has paid for the \$70,000 bond over the past 13 and 1/2 years. The two buildings, constructed in 1970 were dedicated to two church members—Ray Trevett and Kenneth Perry. Pictured (from left) are: Larry Doffing, chairman of the deacons; C. H. Stone Jr., pastor; Kenneth Perry, trustee at the time of the construction and Don Welch, educational director and deacon.

Revival Dates

Bellevue Church, Hattiesburg: April 29-May 4; 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Joe Hasson, pastor of Westview, Jackson, evangelist; A. J. Pace, pastor.

Friendship Church, Aberdeen: Apr. 29-May 3; Sun. services, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; during week, 7 p.m.; Ronnie Mitchell, evangelist; music director, Dudley Brasher; O. E. Langner, pastor.

Pleasant Hill (Leake): April 27, 28, 29; at 7 p.m. on Fri. and Sat.; at 11 a.m. and 6:45 p.m. on Sun.; Curtis James, interim pastor, of Jackson, preaching; Norman Van Wye, leading the singing.

Parkhill Church, Jackson: April 29-May 2; Howard Benton, pastor of Eastside Church, Pearl, preaching; James Beasley, minister of music, First, Crystal Springs, leading the music; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; at 7:30 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; James C. Edwards, pastor.

Oloh Church (Lamar): April 29-May 3; Willie Ray Curtis, pastor of First Church, Denham Springs, La., guest speaker; Curtis's wife, Cathy, sharing special music in each service; congregational singing under direction of Billy Smith, music director at Oloh; Tim Patrick, pastor.

Crestview, Hattiesburg: April 29-May 4; Danny Hood, pastor of North Park Church, Orlando, Fla., and former pastor in Mississippi, evangelist; music under direction of W. C. Rainey, Jr., minister of music at the church; special music planned for each service; Raymond Parkin, pastor; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. at 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Mission Hill, Wesson: April 27-29; David Patterson, youth director of Liberty Church, Newton, evangelist; Friday and Saturday services at 7 p.m.; regular morning services Sunday, with dinner on the grounds; afternoon music service; Vann Windom, pastor.

Harmony (Carroll): April 30-May 4; services at 7:30 p.m.; H. C. Bailey, pastor of Phillipston Church, Sidon, bringing the messages; Luther Lindsey, pastor. Homecoming day, April 29. (See "Homecomings.")

Sand Ridge (Scott): April 29; homecoming, celebration of being debt free on building; note burning; Ken West, pastor, Poplar Springs, Mendenhall, speaker; dinner on the ground; singing in the afternoon; The Proclaimers, Straight from the Carpenter's Shop, to sing; Sunday School at 10 a.m.; Jimmy Sellers, pastor.

Johns Church, Johns: April 29-May 2; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 1:15 p.m., with dinner at church; Mon.-Wed. 7:30 p.m.; evangelist: Troy Land, pastor of Fellowship Church, Mendenhall; music director: Tommy Jenkins, Hattiesburg; pastor: Troy Grubbs.

Linwood Church, Union: May 6-11; at 7 nightly; Jess Page, evangelist; Dennis McCoy, song leader; Johnny Collins, pastor.

Martin Bluff, Gautier: April 29-May 6; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Sat. at 7 p.m.; Kenna Byrd, Pascagoula, evangelist; Leon Schilling, music director; dinner on the grounds on Sunday, May 6; Paul S. Kirke, interim pastor.

New Hope Church, Gulfport: April 29-May 4; guest speaker, John Merck, revivalist-evangelist, South Carolina; J. T. Hannaford, First Church, Moss Point, guest music director; services Sunday morning at 10:30, Sunday evening at 7; Mon.-Fri. at 7:30 p.m. Jerry Estes, pastor.

A lay renewal weekend is scheduled for **Southside Church, Jackson**, on May 4, 5, and 6. Sessions will begin at 5:30 p.m. and go to 9:30 p.m. on Friday, and they will be from 8:30 a.m. until 9 p.m. on Saturday. On Sunday the sessions will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 9:30 a.m. for Sunday School and worship services. Sharing and evaluation will be at 6 p.m. Donald N. Bozeman is pastor.

391 students are baptized

NASHVILLE — Mississippi ranked tenth among state conventions in baptizing college students in 1983 with a total of 391 reported by churches in the state through the Uniform Church Letter.

Texas led all state conventions with 2,110. Florida was second with 1,028, California, third, 868, and Oklahoma, fourth, 832.

Nationwide, the total of college students baptized in Southern Baptist churches was 11,318, down slightly from the 1982 total of 11,702.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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During CHRISTIAN HOME WEEK (May 6 - 13, 1984) and on MOTHER'S DAY (May 13, 1984) your church, its awareness of our needs, and its involvement in our mission effort, becomes absolutely critical for us. The expansion of our facilities and programs, the high money cost of everything we need and use, the expensive challenge of the older and more troubled child we currently serve, combine to render our need for your prayerful understanding and your increased dollar support - AS A CHURCH - greater than ever in 1984. We can appeal to your church, as an organized church, only during Christian Home Week and at Mother's Day. More than 75% of our minimum need must be met through designated giving this year.

If your church does not have a supply of Mother's Day gift envelopes we will be pleased to send them to you on request. Informational brochures and other means of communicating to your church our message and our need are also available. By this letter we earnestly request that our need and our ministry be effectively presented to our Baptist friends throughout the state. We solicit your prayers and influence throughout the year, and we pray for a substantial cash offering from churches throughout Mississippi at this MOTHER'S DAY 1984.

Respectfully,

PAUL N. NUNNERY
Executive Director



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Parental Support	1.0%
Other	9.0%

*Figures based upon budget for year ending 6/30/84.

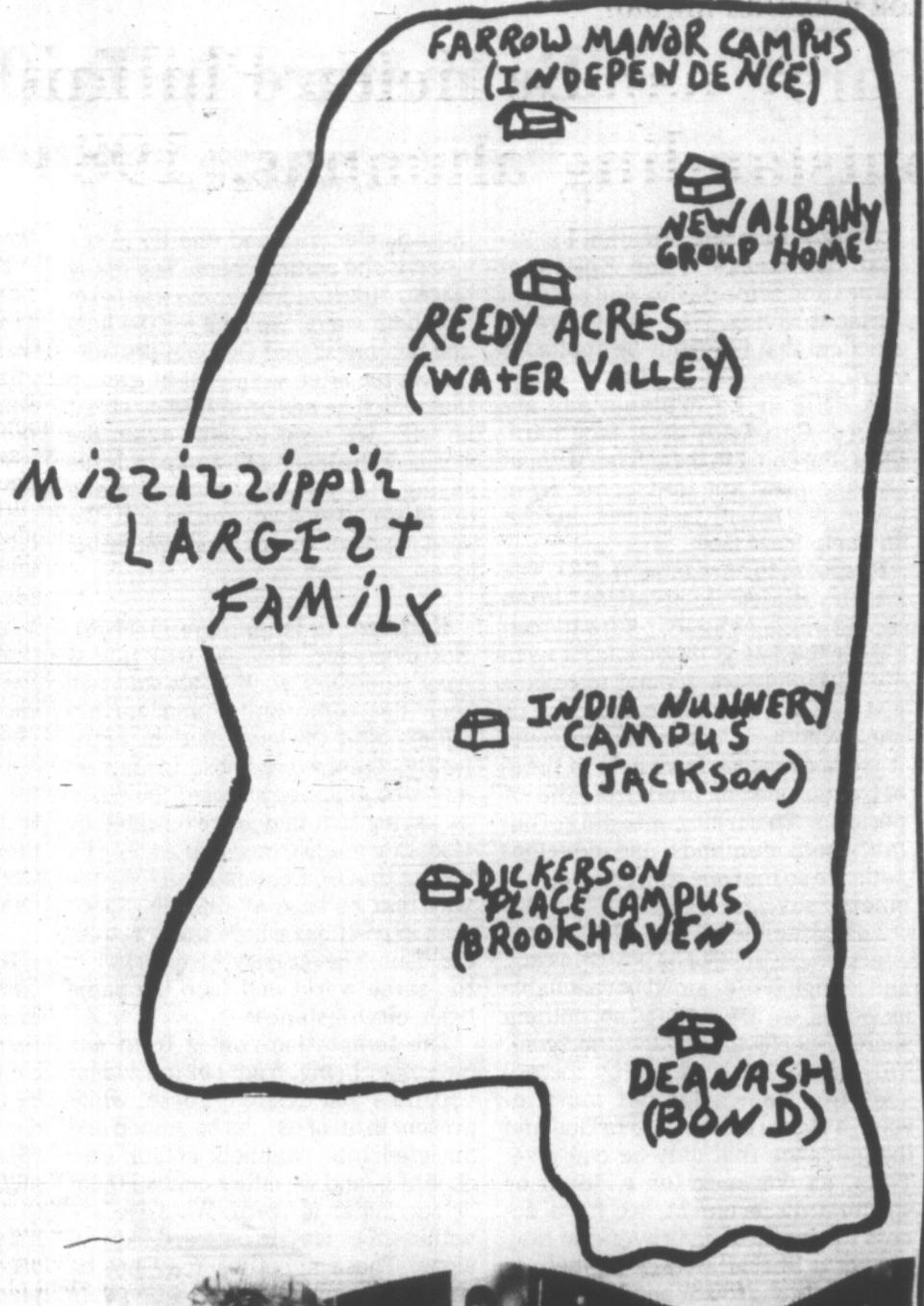
HOW WE SPEND IT**

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Education	7.0%
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Administration	9.0%
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Capital Outlays & Debt Service	12.0%
Contingencies	1.0%
Promotion & Development	2.0%

**Figures based upon budget for year ending 6/30/84.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?..."
(Lamentations 1:12a)

"When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up".
(Psalms 27:10)



Christian Home Week...
MAY 6-13, 1984

Be mature in faith

By Robert Earl Shirley, pastor, Parkway, Tupelo
James 1:2-8, 12-21

We now turn our attention for the next five weeks to the Epistle of James and some day by day needs of Christian living. The words are so practical that they may be applied to every person and so clearly stated that little or no explanations are needed. Christians must face hardships that come to them from without and temptations that come from within, and in both instances, one can find help from God.

Response to hardships (1:2-8). The word translated "temptations" in the second verse actually refers to testings or hardships that confront us in life. Certainly we are not to rejoice just because troubles come upon us and covet them, but rather, we count it joy because we have help in times of trouble and can profit from the experience. This trying or testing of our faith both demands and develops patience so that one who endures will emerge stronger than ever before.

The principle of growth is found everywhere in Christian thinking, and though it is deemed unreachable as long as we are in the flesh, nothing short of perfection is to be our goal. This cannot be achieved by merely acquiring knowledge but must involve a right relationship to God and the guidance that only he can give. Thus, as we seek for wisdom or spiritual discernment, we have access to him through prayer and may expect a liberal answer for help in our spiritual growth and living.

Before this comes to pass, there

must be sincerity and finality in our resolve and commitment. Too many of us are like Lot's wife who wanted to look both ways. We long for the help and happiness that God can provide, but we too often wonder if he can do that which he has promised or else if he will. We need to hear again the words of the leper who came to Jesus saying, "If you will, you can make me clean." God can, and he will. We need not doubt either his power or his love.

Response to temptation (1:12-18). Not everyone, though, will find it easy to endure such trials and will feel that compromise and earthly outlets offer the best solution. Apparently, there were those in James' day who actually justified their sins by saying that they were tempted by God. One might excuse his sinning by saying that God created him to do the way that he does or that he placed man in positions where sin is inevitable. This is never true. All of us live in the same world and face the same basic circumstances.

The temptation comes from our own inner being, from our individual appetites and desires. These, while present in all of us, can be guided and directed into channels of our own choosing, and we either control them or surrender to them. What we are within gives way to outward expressions. These appetites may not be wrong in themselves, but when they are not controlled or properly used,

they give way to abuse and sin.

To illustrate, James used the picture of conception and birth, ensuing growth, and eventual death. This warning concerning the ultimate end of sin serves as a warning to those who are unconcerned about abnormal appetites and those who simply want to experiment with questionable practices.

Contrary to the idea that God tempts one to evil, James declares that every good gift and every perfect gift is a blessing from our heavenly Father. It was his own will that gave us a well ordered world and that sent a Redeemer when men chose to sin. The expression, variability and shadow of turning, is apparently an astronomical term of the day referring to the changing intensity of the light from the sun and moon and is used to declare that God's goodness never changes. We can count our blessings every day.

Response to the word (1:19-21). Since the grace of God has blessed us in such large measure, we ought to respond with meekness and self-control and not resist or be angered by instruction and guidance. In this, one is to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. James used the metaphor of removing one's clothing to say that we are to lay aside all filthiness and moral weakness and receive the Gospel that is able to implant itself in our hearts, change our lives, and save our souls.

In chapters 1-6 Amos kept saying "Thus says the Lord." The study today is a section in which he says "God showed me."

I. The vision of the locusts (7:1-3)

He sees God preparing (in the lava stage) a swarm of locusts. Amos knows immediately that if they mature it will be the end of the spring crops. He then saw the awesome destruction after the swarm (fully developed) and passed through the fields (1-2). The prophet was deeply moved to intercede in prayer for his land. Even though the nation saw itself as strong, he saw it rightly as small and defenseless before God (2b). Because of the intercessory prayer of the prophet, God repented (3). This means God changed his course of action. It does not mean God had a change of heart, for God's heart is always turned to respond to spiritual condition of his people. Who knows how many times the hand of God has been stayed by the intercession of one praying person?

II. The vision of fire (4-6)

He next saw God preparing a fire (probably drought). The fire began in the great deep beneath the earth (drying all sources of water) so that the farmland was being consumed (4). Once again the prophet begged God to stop, appealing that Jacob (synonym for Israel) was unable to stand and contest against God (5). This idea of contending with God shows that Amos saw these visions as judgment against the nation for their evil.

Once again the intercession of the prophet caused God to relent (6).

III. The vision of the plumbline (7-9)

This time the prophet sees the Lord standing by a wall with a plumbline in his hand (7). The purpose was to see the degree to which the wall was not "true" or how far it varied from being vertical. This time God initiates the conversation and asks Amos if he can tell, as God can tell, just how far Israel has deviated. It is so obvious that Amos does not even intercede this time as God declares that because of it he can "spare them no longer" (8).

The high places (places of idol worship I Kings 12:31-13:34) with its false priesthood (not Levites) are to be utterly wiped out along with the sanctuaries (9a). This national evil is

an outgrowth of the evils of Jeroboam and will result in an invasion and defeat by the sword (9b).

IV. Amos confronted by Amaziah (10-17)

Amaziah, the hireling priest of Jeroboam, reports to the king that Amos is conspiring against him and that he is danger to the land. He tells the king that Amos predicts the king's death by the sword and that the land will go into exile (10-11). Amaziah then apparently drew the duty to take care of the matter and told Amos to go home (to Judah) and do his prophesying there but not to disturb Israel any longer. This is a politically based state religion opposed to be true religion of Jehovah (12-13).

Amos responds that he is not a prophet by choice or birth (a Levite) but by the call of God. His choice was to farm. God's choice was for him to prophesy (14-15). Because Amaziah has set himself against God (16) then four things will happen to him: his wife will be violated (become a prostitute) by the enemy soldiers; his sons and daughters will be killed; his land will be measured and given away; and Amaziah himself will die in a foreign (unclean) land (17).

V. The vision of summer fruit (8:1-3)

God showed Amos a basket filled with the produce of the land after the growing season. The harvest was normally a joyous time in Israel. The words for "summer fruit" and the word for "end" sound very much alike in Hebrew. God used the play on words to say that it was the "end" (1-2a). The future harvest would not be what they expected. God would not "pass by" (2b) as he did in the Passover in Egypt, but will not spare them this time.

How many times God has stood "at the door" to bring judgment upon the world, no one knows. Nor does anyone know how many times he has stayed his hand because of the prayers of his people. But we do know that one day Jesus will suddenly come in judgment upon evil! It will happen even as he has said.

Visions of destruction

By Bill Catsey, pastor, Parkway, Jackson
Amos 7:1-8:3

Life and Work

A dedicated parent

By Gerald P. Buckley, pastor, Parkway, Natchez
Luke 1:26-56

It is an awesome event to become a parent. When one looks down into a tiny bed containing his child, he feels some deep emotions. It is a staggering responsibility to be a parent. Many mothers and dads have struggled with feelings of inadequacy as they faced the pressure and demands of the day in which we live. It is not easy to be a parent today, and we need help and encouragement to make our homes what they ought to be.

The family is the strength of a nation. When family life is strong, the nation thrives. History shows that when the family begins to disintegrate, the fall of the nation quickly follows.

Our day has seen tremendous pressure exerted on the family. Our highly mobile society has been a factor. The home is no longer the center of activity. Economic factors have entered in. Many wives have found it necessary to work outside the home. This has introduced problems in the home, especially in the care and rearing of children. Broken homes and one parent families are all too common.

For the next four weeks, the lessons will focus on the family. We will examine appropriate scripture in an effort to learn what God teaches about the home. In the lesson this

week, we will examine the relationship of Jesus to his family.

I. God's message to Mary (Luke 1:30-35)

"You are pregnant and will bear a child." Hundreds of times daily such a report rolls from the lips of doctors. What an exciting announcement for young couples ready to enlarge their families. What a welcome relief for long-married partners who eagerly have awaited the promise of a child. What thrilling news for persons who have prayed for the presence of a new life in their homes. But, what about this statement to a young girl only betrothed, not married?

The angel told Mary that she would bear a son who would be named Jesus. His description of the son indicated that he would be the long awaited Messiah. Mary was confused. How could she become pregnant when she had not yet entered into the husband-wife relationship? Who would father the child?

The angel informed Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her. Her conception would be by the power of the Holy Spirit. Viewing it purely from the biological viewpoint, some categorically deny the possibility of a virgin birth. Mary did not do so. Neither did Luke the physician. The virgin birth of Jesus rests firmly on Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38.

Both Matthew and Luke are careful to point out that Joseph was not the father of Jesus.

"He shall be called great." The birth of this child was to be a blessing to many. The anticipation of the birth of a baby is a mixture of both fear and joy. Fear comes as one looks at the possibilities of danger involved in the birth and development of a child. Joy comes over the prospects involved in the child. Who can measure the potential inherent in a new-born baby? God chose Mary to give birth to his Son, and to rear his Son to maturity.

II. A song of praise and rejoicing (Luke 1:38-46-50)

Mary committed herself to the will of God. The key word here is obedience. She put herself into the hands of God in humble trust in his will. There was no analysis or speculation. She was simply ready and willing to obey, and for her the issue was settled. In beautiful submission, she called herself "the handmaid of the Lord." She neither raised objections nor speculated about the hardships the situation might bring her.

Poetry has been called the overflow of powerful feeling. Mary was so filled by the Spirit and so conscious of the power and glory of God that she broke out in exalted poetry, a psalm of praise. How wonderful that God had chosen one so lowly for such an

exalted role.

To Mary was granted the blessedness of being the mother of the Son of God. Well might her heart be filled with an amazing joy at so great a privilege. And yet that very blessedness was to be a sword to pierce her heart. That very glory was to break her heart. She was blessed and that very blessedness meant that some day she would see that son of hers hanging on a cross. To be chosen by God so often means at the same time a crown of joy and a cross of sorrow. The piercing truth is that God does not choose a person for ease and comfort but for a great task that will take all that head and heart and hand can bring to it. God chooses a person to use that person.

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'We gather together'

Pictured above left and right are scenes from downtown Kansas City. Massive Roe Bartle Hall (left with triangular designs) will be the working address for the Southern Baptist Convention, June 12-14, for its 127th gathering. Above right shows some of the downtown lodging in the city. The Kansas City area has more than 13,000 hotel and motel rooms so all SBC messengers should be able to find one. All of it won't be located downtown, but all should have easy access via freeway to the convention center.

Hong Kong's 1997 deadline: countdown for Christians

By Erich Bridges

HONG KONG (BP) — Susanne sits in her family's small furniture shop, hands clenched tightly in her lap, and weeps.

The young, unmarried, middle-class Baptist woman must make an agonizing decision about the future: to leave Hong Kong or to stay? Her aging parents don't want to leave home for a strange land; but already a sister lives in France, and a brother has left to study in the United States. She fears the disintegration of her family.

A larger fear hovers in the background. Susanne thinks Hong Kong may "melt like ice cream" before long. But it is home; and if Christians leave, Susanne asks, who will remain to preach Christ and train believers? "I'm asking God what I should do," she said. "I'm asking myself now. It will be too late then."

"Then" in 1997. Hong Kong is living on borrowed time, and 1997 is the year the debt comes due. That's when England's century-and-a-half rule over this tiny piece of south China comes to an end. The 99-year British lease on the "New Territories"—a 367-square-mile chunk of Chinese real estate — expires July 1 of that year. But China also intends to reclaim nearby Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula.

England claims two 19th century treaties with China made Hong Kong and Kowloon permanent British possessions. China says the treaties were signed at gunpoint and are null and void.

The dispute goes back to the first Opium War, a two-year conflict over the then-booming opium trade which pitted British warships against weak Chinese Imperial forces. The 1842 Treaty of Nanking ended the fight-

ing, opened five Chinese ports to British trade and gave Hong Kong Island to England as a Crown colony. Kowloon and nearby Stonecutters Island followed in an 1860 treaty.

Communist China has tolerated the existence of this frantically capitalist corner on its southern shore in return for the major economic benefits Hong Kong brings to the mainland. But the Chinese insist they will "recover sovereignty" of the area in 1997, perhaps sooner.

Christians in Hong Kong, including more than 30,000 Baptists, have an especially urgent reason for wanting to know what will happen and when: their religious freedom is at stake. They wonder to what extent Chinese control of Hong Kong will mean control of the church.

In China, Protestants worshipping in recently reopened churches belong to the Three Self Patriotic Movement, a government-recognized organization committed to self support, self-government and self-propagation. (Chinese Catholics belong to a similar organization which doesn't recognize Vatican authority.) Churches, clergy, seminaries, and religious literature are approved and overseen by the government Religious Affairs Bureau.

Christians in China have the constitutional right to believe and worship, but no explicit right to evangelize. Missionaries and material support from abroad are prohibited.

One high-ranking Chinese official based in Hong Kong told an Italian delegation in January the "three self" rules will not apply to Hong Kong Christians after 1997, implying local churches might enjoy autonomy and foreign missionaries

might be allowed to stay.

The 72 Southern Baptist missionaries in Hong Kong have to prepare for the possibility of leaving, however. They remember what happened after the Communists came to power in China in 1949. Official opposition to missionaries increased step by step, making ministry and relations with Christians more and more difficult. By the end of 1951 all Southern Baptists were gone.

Will the same thing happen in Hong Kong? Possibly, but several missionaries see no reason to assume the worst. "I think there are certain situations that would perhaps permit a toleration of us," especially those offering professional or educational skills, said Jerry Barrett of Hong Kong Baptist College.

Hong Kong Baptists can face 1997 and beyond without missionaries if need be, but many are worried about the current exodus of Chinese pastors. "The churches are already suffering because we have seen quite a few pastors leaving the city going to the United States," said one Baptist spokesman. "There is a surplus of Chinese ministers in San Francisco and New York, whereas in Hong Kong we don't have enough."

Other pastors are opting for ministry in Canada, Europe, or elsewhere in Asia.

Rather than actively retreating, however, many church leaders are struggling to decide how to cope with the crisis, or whether to acknowledge there is a crisis at all. Some see no point in worrying about what will happen 13 years from now. But an encouraging determination to face 1997 and even take advantage of it may be emerging among young church members.

"We should prepare for the change," said a member of a young-adult Sunday school class. "We should discipline ourselves. We are a mirror of the social environment in Hong Kong. We love to buy luxury goods and things like that. But if we want to adjust to the new atmosphere we have to discipline ourselves and spread the gospel news to people as quickly as we can."

Private British-Chinese negotiations about the colony's future began last summer alternating between Hong Kong and Beijing (Peking). Despite extreme secrecy, speculation about the goings-on at the talks has become the daily topic of conversation in nervous Hong Kong. "This is a rumor-mongering town," observed one missionary.

The talks appeared to be deadlocked in the early rounds, but the outline of a settlement now seems to be emerging. The British have been pressing for continued administrative control of the colony in return for an acknowledgement of China's sovereignty, a deal Beijing rejects. But the Chinese are reportedly offering a 50-year grace period after 1997 with no major changes, a "mini-constitution" guaranteeing local self-rule, plus special economic status allowing capitalism to continue.

Hong Kong's 5.5 million people watch anxiously as the two powers decide their future. Baptists and missionaries, meanwhile, are beginning to act. The 1997 deadline, whether it brings drastic change or not, has put one priority in sharp focus for them: evangelism and discipleship must come first.

(Bridges writes for the Foreign Mission Board.)

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Editorials by don mcgregor

What about the SBC?

As convention time approaches, perhaps it is time once again to examine the organism called the Southern Baptist Convention and seek to understand what it is and why it is what it is. There are voices from many directions at this time trying to determine what the Southern Baptist Convention is by their own pronouncements of what they think it should be.

What is it, really? There is absolutely no source of definition but the constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention. Please read:

"It is the purpose of the Convention to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad and any other objects such as Christian education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God."

Everything we do as the Southern Baptist Convention has to fit into that mold. Anything that doesn't fit the mold we have no reason to argue about at the convention sessions.

Then it says, "While independent and sovereign in its own sphere, the Convention does not claim and will never attempt to exercise any authority over any other Baptist body, whether church, auxiliary organizations, associations, or convention."

Let's take a look at what is happening among Southern Baptists.

On the one hand there are those who would say that given the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer there is no way to build a fence around what a Southern Baptist is, almost giving rise to the thought that one can believe almost anything as long as he supports the missions causes for which the Southern Baptist Conven-

tion was organized. On the other hand there are those who would say that to be able to join together in missions efforts, all Southern Baptists must subscribe to a doctrinal position that includes beliefs almost specifically described; and the priesthood of the believer gives those who cannot find themselves within that boundary of beliefs the license to find some other group which would come nearer to fitting their concepts.

Then there are Southern Baptists strung out from one end to the other between these two positions.

The constitution, however, does not speak to this issue at all. The reason for the Southern Baptist Convention is missions, and that would seem to indicate that for one to be a Southern Baptist he must have some interest in and be in support of the Southern Baptist system for supporting its missions work. The priesthood of the believer does not enter into this, for it is not a doctrinal situation.

On the other hand there is what would seem to be an unwritten condition that for one to be a Southern Baptist he must at least be a Baptist. So what is a Baptist? This is where the priesthood of the believer is a factor. That doctrine, in which we all believe firmly, would tell us that we cannot dictate to anyone what his beliefs must be. And while we would all say with certainty that there is a limit beyond which a person cannot go and remain a Baptist, none of us can say that he knows precisely where that limit is. The doctrine of the priesthood of the believer prevents us from doing that.

Jimmy Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, sought to establish a list of basic positions that would characterize a Southern Baptist. It was surely a list with which every Southern Baptist could agree totally. In fact, it would be difficult to feel a person would be a Christian who could not subscribe to these four bedrock beliefs. They were a belief in the full humanity and deity of Christ, substitutionary atonement by Christ for the sins of mankind, justification by God's grace through faith, and belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ.

I believe I would add a couple. They would be the virgin birth of Christ and the triumphant return of Christ. Also I would like to see included such concepts as baptism by immersion of believers only, eternal security of the believer, the Bible as the sole authority for the Christian life and each believer responsible to God alone for his beliefs. Now we have 10 rather than four beliefs, however; and very likely every Southern Baptist among us believes in at least six of these 10. The problem is that we can't all agree on which six we feel are necessary and which four could be left out, and so we take sides.

When Draper came up with his list, the opinion was voiced by many that we all believe all of those; but we can't afford to subscribe to them officially, for to do so would be to establish a creed, and we have no creed

but the Bible. That's one of the 10 tenets.

There are 14 million of us. We have enjoyed being able to say that we are the nation's largest Protestant denomination. We must face the fact, however, that also we are unwieldy.

So what is the answer? There never will be one, and we may as well face it. In 1925 we tried to establish a statement to define ourselves. We revised it in 1963 and called it the Baptist Statement of Faith and Message. It should serve the purpose, but there are many who also have begun to disagree on the meaning of portions of this statement.

There is no one to tell us we all have to interpret the Baptist Statement of Faith and Message in the same way. In its own preamble it establishes the fact that it is not intended to be a creed.

One of the mainstays of Baptist beliefs is that we are each responsible to God individually for the final for-

THROUGH THE GREAT BOOK



mulation of our beliefs based on searching the scriptures. This gives rise, however, to our inability to agree among ourselves. This facet of Baptist life will be discussed next week. The writer does not consider himself the final authority on Baptist life. He has been observing Baptists for more than a quarter of a century, however, and finds himself in a position of possibly providing interpretation. Perhaps it will be helpful.

Part II

Churches, friends divide over James Robison, Milton Green

By Toby Druin

DALLAS (BP)—Leading Southern Baptist pastors are divided over the ministry of longtime Southern Baptist evangelist James Robison and his new associate, Milton Green.

Robison, once known as "God's angry young man," has swapped the appellation for an emphasis on deliverance, healing and demons. Over the past two years, the James Robison Evangelistic Association has sponsored seminars featuring the Bible teaching of Green, a one-time carpet cleaner with a ninth grade education from Cleveland, Tenn.

Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, is concerned because of what he believes is an extreme emphasis on the demonic and an abuse of the doctrine of healing.

Draper, also Robison's pastor, said the controversy over the ministry of Robison and Green has spread across the convention and "has divided friends . . . has affected churches."

Critics of the Robison-Green ministry say it includes charismatic teachings, including emphases on healing and demonology and an anti-local church, anti-pastor bias. Several prominent SBC churches—including First Baptist of Dallas and First Southern Baptist of Del City, Okla., have cancelled or postponed Robison appearances.

Newport questions Green's use of the Scriptures, which he says is not appropriate; his antagonism toward traditional churches and denominations; Green's seeing just one great spiritual church with local churches and denominations being headed up by people just looking out for them-

selves, and an extreme dualism where the world is overwhelmed by the demonic.

Newport adds: "He thinks theologians, people like I am, or pastors or educated preachers are sort of the bane of God."

Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Baptist Church, said several members of his church have attended a Robison-Green seminar "and the immediate effect is that they come back judgmental, critical."

While Jackson has not attended a seminar, he said he has listened to tapes, heard reports from reliable people who attended and discussed them with Robison. The popular preacher also compared some of Green's statements with similar pronouncements made in the past by Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons, Christian Scientist Mary Baker Eddy and Jehovah's Witnesses founder Charles Taze Russell.

Jackson questions Green's method of interpretation and conclusions, but said: "The thing that is most devastating to me is that within an hour of the opening of the seminars, the local church and all the local church pastors are placed in question if not condemnation. The statement is made that what you (the person attending the seminar) have been getting is deception and dishonesty."

John Bisagno, pastor of First Church, Houston, Tex., said there "are some truths in much of what is (Continued on page 4)

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